

## UNIT OVERVIEW

**Course Name:** Philanthropy and Government  
**Unit Title:** Majority Rule<sup>3/4</sup> Minority Rights  
**Grade Level:** 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grades

### Overview:

Two questions that a representative democracy has to repeatedly ask and answer are:

- (1) How can the people retain control over and access to their elected representatives between elections? and
- (2) Will the majority govern without being corrupted by its power and violate the rights of the minority?

Students will wrestle with these fundamental questions, personalize the issues and apply the principles learned to a case study illustrating the role of the independent sector to protect the minority.

### National Content Standards:

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

### Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:

Lesson One:	SOC.III.3.HS.2	
Lesson Two:	SOC.III.2.HS.2	SOC.III.3.HS.2
Lesson Three:	SOC.III.2.HS.2	SOC.III.3.HS.2

### Philanthropy Theme(s):

Philanthropy and Civil Society	PHIL.II.PCS05.HS.4	PHIL.II.PCS05.HS.7
	PHIL.II.PCS05.HS.12	

### Unit Purpose:

In a civil society, we need to protect the rights of the minority in order to protect government from itself and the corrupting potential of power. It is in the enlightened self-interest of the majority to protect the rights of the minority because one day the majority will find itself in the minority. Organizations in the independent sector work to protect the rights of the minority.

### Unit Objectives:

*The learner will:*

- analyze the rights and responsibilities of the majority.
- explain the interrelationship between majority rule and minority rights.
- describe the rights and responsibilities of the minority.
- evaluate the role of the independent sector in protecting the rights of the minority.

### **Experiential Component:**

Prepare students to eventually participate (voluntarily) in an independent sector organization that works to protect the rights of the minority.

### **Time:**

Three to Six Fifty-Five Minute Class Periods.

### **Lesson Titles:**

1. Is Anyone Listening?
2. The Majority Rules, But...
3. Ordering a Pizza

### **Unit Assessment:**

- Concept map
- Pre and post graffiti board
- Journal writing
- Ordering a pizza simulation
- Group collage representing “*Principles of American Government*”

### **School/Home Connection:**

None for this lesson.

### **Notes for Teaching:**

This unit follows units on popular sovereignty, representative government and limited government. A bulletin board is devoted to the picture on top of a puzzle box and the title of the puzzle is “Principles of American Government.” The previously cited units represent three pieces of this puzzle. Each piece is a collage created by the class. Remind the class that they are completing the two remaining pieces and that all five pieces are interrelated.

For clarification of “*Principles of American Government*” see *Civitas* and *National Standards for Civics and Government*.

### **Bibliographical References:**

- Bahmueller, Charles. *Civitas: A Framework for Civic Education*. Calabasas: Center for Civic Education, 1991. ISBN: 0-89818-124-0.
- *National Standards for Civics and Government*. Calabasas: Center for Civic Education, 1994. ISBN: 0-89818-155-0.

## Michigan Curriculum Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
Lesson One:		
SOC. III. Civic Perspective	3. Democracy In Action	HS. 2. Explain why people may agree on democratic values in the abstract, but disagree when they are applied to specific situations.
Lesson Two:		
SOC. III. Civic Perspective	2. Ideals of American Democracy	HS. 2. Use the ideas in the Declaration of Independence to evaluate the conduct of citizens, political behavior, and the practices of government.
SOC. III. Civic Perspective	3. Democracy In Action	HS. 2. Explain why people may agree on democratic values in the abstract, but disagree when they are applied to specific situations.
Lesson Three:		
SOC. III. Civic Perspective	2. Ideals of American Democracy	HS. 2. Use the ideas in the Declaration of Independence to evaluate the conduct of citizens, political behavior, and the practices of government.
SOC. III. Civic Perspective	3. Democracy In Action	HS. 2. Explain why people may agree on democratic values in the abstract, but disagree when they are applied to specific situations.

## Philanthropy Theme Framework:

Strand	Standard	Benchmark
Lesson One:		
PHIL II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	HS. 7. Examine the role of the United States as a member of various international communities.
Lesson Two:		
PHIL II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	HS. 12. Explain why private action is important to the protection of minority voices.
Lesson Three:		
PHIL II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	HS. 4. Identify and discuss nonprofit organizations working to protect individual rights, equity, and justice.

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Lesson Developed and Piloted by:  
Jerry Morris, Ph.D.  
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**Course Name:** Philanthropy and Government  
**Unit Title:** Majority Rule—Minority Rights  
**Grade Level:** 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grades  
**Lesson Title:** Lesson One: Is Anyone Listening?  
**Duration:** One to Two Fifty-Five Minute Class Periods

**National Content Standards:**

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

**Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:**  
SOC.III.3.HS.2

**Philanthropy Theme(s):**

Philanthropy and Civil Society PHIL.II.PCS05.HS.7

**Purpose:**

Create a scenario that frames a problem and have students think about the role of the four sectors (*private, public, independent, and family*) to address problems.

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

- describe problems facing society.
- distinguish between the four sectors of the economy.
- determine which sector has the responsibility and authority to address a problem.

**Experiential Component:**

None for this lesson.

**Materials:**

*Problems and the Four Sectors of the Economy (Attachment One)*

**Instructional Procedure(s):**

*Anticipatory Set:*

*Using the overhead, give the following assignment. At Halloween, before children get candy, they yell, “Trick or treat,” or “Help the poor.” Think about other words for “poor” and complete the phrase “Help the \_\_\_\_\_” using that word. As examples suggest that students think about issues, situations, problems, people, nature, etc.*

**OR**

*Ask the students to think about what in the world or in your city or in your neighborhood or in your school makes you angry.*

**Instructional Procedure(s) [Continued]:**

- Set the stage by telling the students to imagine they are in the downtown of a city; the day is sunny and mild; birds are heard singing; people are going about their business. A man is seen looking out the shut window of a fifth floor apartment. He unlocks the latch, raises the window, leans out and yells (with more and more anger, ala “Network News”): “I’m mad...and I’m not going to take it any more!” (Repeat the phrase several times, getting louder and angrier.) Do a “think-pair-share” to determine what students think the man is yelling about.
- As a whole class, ask the students to brainstorm their ideas and record them on the board. Have the class pick one idea as the focal point of the lesson.
- As a whole class, ask the students *why* they think the man is yelling. Record their ideas and categorize them according to the four sectors of the economy. Explain the meaning of the four sectors of the economy, defining each as needed.
- Distribute *Problems and the Four Sectors of the Economy (Attachment One)* to each group of four students. Have each group speculate about what the man could have done to solve the problem. If students disagree about solutions to the problem, explain that although people may agree on democratic values, they may disagree when those values are applied to specific situations. Whenever the problem involves the United States and other countries, examine the role of the United States as a member of the international community.
- As a whole class, record each group’s solutions using the chart. Draw inferences from student input about where people can turn for help and if certain sectors seem to address certain problems.
- Closure – Have the students do a journal entry responding to the following prompt: The man thinks that the government should have done more to help him. Put yourself in the role of the man. Adopt his point of view and his anger. Explain why he thinks the way he does.

**Assessment:**

- The assessment is primarily teacher observation and is intended to identify prior knowledge and misunderstandings.
- Journal entry
- Group work

**School/Home Connection:**

Have students finish the scenario at home and explain the scenario to their parents. Have the parents respond to the scenario in writing. Have the parents sign their work and have the students return it the next day.

**Extension:**

None for this lesson.

### **Bibliographical References:**

None for this lesson.

### **Michigan Curriculum Framework:**

Strand		Standard	Benchmark
SOC.	III. Civic Perspective	3. Democracy In Action	HS. 2. Explain why people may agree on democratic values in the abstract, but disagree when they are applied to specific situations.

### **Philanthropy Theme Framework:**

Strand		Standard	Benchmark
PHIL	II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	HS. 7. Examine the role of the United States as a member of various international communities.

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#### **Lesson Developed and Piloted by:**

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**Attachment One**  
**Lesson One: Is Anyone Listening?**

**Problems and the Four Sectors of the Economy**

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>	<b>Public Sector</b>	<b>Independent Sector</b>	<b>Family</b>

**Course Name:** Philanthropy and Government  
**Unit Title:** Majority Rule – Minority Rights  
**Lesson Title:** Lesson Two: The Majority Rules, But...  
**Grade Level:** 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grades  
**Duration:** One to Two Fifty-Five Minute Class Periods

**National Content Standards:**

<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

**Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:**

SOC.III.2.HS.2      SOC.III.3.HS.2

**Philanthropy Theme(s):**

Philanthropy and Civil Society      PHIL.II.PCS05.HS.12

**Purpose:**

For the American system of government to work, the majority has the power to rule and the responsibility not to trample the rights of the minority. The minority must have the right to become the majority and have its voice heard. People often blame the government without thinking that other sectors of the economy can and do play a role.

**Objectives:**

*The learner will:*

- explain the meaning of majority rule and minority rights.
- defend the idea that majority rule and minority rights are essential principles of American government.
- illustrate the relationship between the five principles of American government.

**Experiential Component:**

None for this lesson.

**Materials:**

- Props to look like a reporter
- Microphone or video camera
- Newsprint
- Two different colored pencils for each student
- Principles of American Government puzzle box top (see note in unit overview)



### **Instructional Procedure(s):**

#### *Anticipatory Set:*

*Become the man in the window and yell, “I’m mad...and I’m not going to take it anymore,” several times. Have the students join in until everyone is participating. Get really loud. Ask the students to become the person in the window. Tell them that they are going to be interviewed by a reporter called to the scene and allowed to enter the apartment.*

- Reporter (teacher), holding a microphone, accompanied by a camera person: Ask a student (the person in the window) a leading question: “We understand from your neighbors that you think the government is to blame for your situation.” Ask follow-up and leading questions of other students to guide them to voice the position that:
  - the government was not listening;
  - what the government did do was not enough;
  - the elected representatives only seem to care about getting re-elected.
- Step out of your role as the reporter and explain that in a democratic republic we are always wrestling with the issue of who has the power; to what end the power should be used; who decides; and how those in power can be limited and influenced. If *we, the people* are not able to control and influence those in power, we will lose our freedom, feel powerless and end up yelling from windows – or worse.
- Review with students the first three principles of American government (popular sovereignty, representative government and limited government) referring to the bulletin board. And tell students that the two remaining pieces are “majority rule” and “minority rights.” Today they will learn the meaning of majority rule and minority rights.
- Divide the class into groups of four and do a “graffiti board” activity. Use majority rule and minority rights as the focus. Record ideas in one color (same for all students) for majority rule and another color for minority rights. Have each group look for similarities and differences from the ideas they generated. What conclusions or generalizations can they reach? Ask each group to report back to the whole class.
- As a whole group, do the W of K-W-L for majority rule and minority rights.
- Define majority rule and minority rights and clarify misunderstandings that have been revealed. Point out that it is necessary for both the government and ordinary citizens to protect minority rights.
- Construct a concept map of the five principles of democracy (popular sovereignty, representative government, limited government, majority rule and minority rights).

**Instructional Procedure(s) [Continued]:**

- Closure - have students complete a journal entry to answer the following questions:
  - Why does the majority rule?
  - Who says so?
  - What's the proof?
  - What are the rights of the minority?
  - Why should the minority have rights?
  - Who protects the rights of the minority?

**Assessment:**

None for this lesson.

**School/Home Connection:**

None for this lesson.

**Extension:**

None for this lesson.

**Bibliographical References:**

- Bennett, Barrie. *Cooperative Learning: Where Heart Meets Mind*. Toronto: Educational Connections, 1991. ISBN: 0-969538804.
- Bahmueller, Charles. *Civitas: A Framework for Civic Education*. Calabasas: Center for Civic Education, 1991. ISBN: 0-89818-124-0.
- *National Standards for Civics and Government*. Calabasas: Center for Civic Education, 1994. ISBN: 0-89818-155-0.

**Michigan Curriculum Framework:**

	Strand	Standard	Benchmark
SOC.	III. Civic Perspective	2. Ideals of American Democracy	HS. 2. Use the ideas in the Declaration of Independence to evaluate the conduct of citizens, political behavior, and the practices of government.
SOC.	III. Civic Perspective	3. Democracy In Action	HS. 2. Explain why people may agree on democratic values in the abstract, but disagree when they are applied to specific situations.

**Philanthropy Theme Framework:**

	Strand	Standard	Benchmark
PHIL	II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	HS. 12. Explain why private action is important to the protection of minority voices.

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Lesson Developed and Piloted by:  
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**Course Name:** Government  
**Unit Title:** Majority Rule—Minority Rights  
**Lesson Title:** Lesson Three: Ordering a Pizza  
**Grade Level:** 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grades  
**Duration:** One to Two Fifty-Five Minute Class Periods  
**Note:** You may want to provide a day off between classes for students to have time to reflect.

**National Content Standards:**  
<http://www.ncss.org/standards/home.html>

**Michigan Content Standards and Benchmarks:**  
SOC.III.2.HS.2 SOC.III.3.HS.2

**Philanthropy Theme(s):**  
Philanthropy and Civil Society PHIL.II.PCS05.HS.4

**Purpose:**  
Practice making a decision using principles of majority rule and minority rights.

**Objectives:**  
*The learner will:*

- explain how the majority uses power to make decisions.
- list the rights of the minority in the decision-making process.
- describe ways the minority can make its voice heard.

**Experiential Component:**  
None for this lesson.

**Materials:**  
None for this lesson.

**Instructional Procedure(s):**  
*Anticipatory Set:*  
*Ten minutes of “free writing.” Have the students remember back to a time when they had to go along with a group decision that was not what they wanted to do. Write about the situation, the group, the decision, how the decision was made and how the student felt. Some will be read. Include no real names or signatures.*

- Collect the writings and read a few. Explore shared feelings and issues. Correct any misunderstandings about majority rule and minority rights that surfaced.

**Instructional Procedure(s) [Continued]:**

- Tell the class that they will have another opportunity to practice making a decision using the principles of majority rule and minority rights. They will be deciding what kind of pizza to order for tomorrow (teacher's treat).
- Create five or seven teams (unequal numbers in each group). Each group should choose a representative by a simple majority vote. Their task is to decide on the two toppings to have on the pizza, what kind of pizza (round or deep dish) and from where the pizza will be ordered. (Only one pizza will be ordered for the class.)
- Representatives from each group should meet in a small circle of five or seven students. The respective groups (constituents) should sit together and form an outer circle. The groups in the outer circle have a responsibility to listen to the conversation; follow how their interests are being represented; discuss among themselves and communicate their ideas to their representatives. (Each outer circle group may decide to work as a unit or individuals may act on their own.) The representatives will only listen to their group members.
- Debrief: Once the decision is made, give each group an opportunity to publicly give feed-back to their representative as to how satisfied they are with his/her conduct. For example, were their interests represented? Were compromises made? If compromises were made, what was the representative's rationale? Did the representative seek feedback from the group as issues evolved or did he/she use individual judgment? Was that okay? Did we see any examples of the representative acting differently from the wishes of the majority? How could that be? Did we hear the representative consider the interests of the minority (vegans, vegetarians, carnivores, etc.)?
- As a whole class, ask the students to consider the needs of the minority – those who did not get what they wanted. Explore how the private, non-profit and family sector might be used to provide the pizza they want. Use the four sectors of society as a framework to guide their thinking. Extend this example of the need for pizza to the role of nonprofit organizations working to protect individual rights, equity, and justice.
- Closure - As small groups, have students look at their graffiti board about majority rule and minority rights and remind themselves what they originally thought about the principles. Have students add new insights and cross out ideas that they no longer hold. Hear feedback from each group.

**Assessment:**

- Debriefing after simulation
- Revision of concept map

**School/Home Connection:**

None for this lesson.

**Extension:**

- Return to the students' original ideas about why the man/woman was yelling from the window and connect their reasons to larger social issues like: addiction, children, abuse, hunger, immigrants, migrant workers, physically challenged, poor, jobless....
- Ask students, *"If you were one of these people where would you turn?"* "To whom or what would you seek help?"
- Tell the students, *"Your mission is to pick an issue; make a list of the how each of the four sectors of society could be of help. We will use this information as a springboard to select an issue to research and propose a solution. There will be an opportunity for you to personally become actively involved in this issue."*
- Some places to start include the Chamber of Commerce, telephone directory, library and place of worship.

**Bibliographical References:**

Elbow, Peter. *Writing With Power*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.  
ISBN: 0-19-5029135.

**Michigan Curriculum Framework:**

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SOC.	III. Civic Perspective	2. Ideals of American Democracy	HS. 2. Use the ideas in the Declaration of Independence to evaluate the conduct of citizens, political behavior, and the practices of government.
SOC.	III. Civic Perspective	3. Democracy In Action	HS. 2. Explain why people may agree on democratic values in the abstract, but disagree when they are applied to specific situations.

**Philanthropy Theme Framework:**

	Strand	Standard	Benchmark
PHIL	II. Philanthropy and Civil Society	PCS05. Philanthropy and Government	HS. 4. Identify and discuss nonprofit organizations working to protect individual rights, equity, and justice.

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